Evaluation of the Indianapolis Mayor Sponsored Charter Schools

Irvington Community Schools Sixth-year Charter Review

2014-2015 School Year

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OFFICE OF EDUCATION INNOVATION

Office of the Mayor of Indianapolis

SIXTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

Irvington Community Schools

October 16-24, 2014

The Office of Education Innovation Sixth Year Charter Review (SYCR) is designed to assess the development of the school as it finishes its sixth year of operation, and serves as an evaluation of the school now that it is well established. The Sixth Year Charter Review Protocol is based on the *Performance Framework*, which is used to determine a school's success relative to a common set of indicators, as well as school-based goals.

Consistent with the Office of Education Innovation Performance Framework, the following four core questions and sub-questions are examined to determine a school's success:

Is the educational program a success?
1.1. *Is the school's academic performance meeting state expectation, as measured by Indiana's accountability system?*
1.2. *Are students making sufficient and adequate gains, as measured by the Indiana Growth model?*
1.3. *Does the school demonstrate that students are improving, the longer they are enrolled at the school?*
1.4. *Is the school providing an equitable education to students of all races and socioeconomic backgrounds?*
1.5. *Is the school's attendance rate strong?*
1.6. *Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?*
1.7. *Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals?*

Is the organization in sound fiscal health?
2.1. *Short term Health: Does the school demonstrate the ability to pay its obligations in the next 12 months?*
2.2. *Long term Health: Does the organization demonstrate long term financial health?*
2.3. *Does the organization demonstrate it has adequate financial management and systems?*

Is the organization effective and well-run?
3.1. *Is the school leader strong in his or her academic and organizational leadership?*
3.2. *Does the school satisfactorily comply with all its organizational structure and governance obligations?*
3.3. *Is the school's board active, knowledgeable and abiding by appropriate policies, systems and processes in its oversight?*
3.4. *Does the school's board work to foster a school environment that is viable and effective?*
3.5. *Does the school comply with applicable laws, regulations and provision of the charter agreement relating to the safety and security of the facility?*

Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

    4.1. *Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?*

    4.2. *Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?*

    4.3. *For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?*

    4.4. *Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?*

    4.5. *Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?*

    4.6. *Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?*

    4.7. *Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?*

    4.8. *Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?*

    4.9 *Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students?*

    4.10 *Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to English as Second Language (ESL) students?*

COMPLETION OF THE SIXTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

As part of its oversight of charter schools, the Office of Education Innovation of the Mayor of Indianapolis has authorized Research & Evaluation Resources (RER) to conduct site visits of schools in their sixth year of operation. The purpose is to present the school and the OEI a professional judgment on conditions and practices at the school, which are best provided through an external perspective. This report uses multiple sources of evidence to understand the school's performance. Evidence collection begins with a review of key documents and continues on-site through additional document review, classroom visits and interviews with any number of stakeholders. Findings provided by the site visits can be used to celebrate what the school is doing well and prioritize its areas for improvement in preparation for renewal. It is the task of the site visit team to report on the following pre-identified aspects of the *Performance Framework* and to assist OEI in its completion of the SYCR Protocol: *Responses to sub-questions 4.1- 4.10 of Core Question 4*.

The outcome of this review will provide the school with a written report that includes a judgment and supporting evidence on various aspects of the school, based on a of indicators[1] developed for each of the four core questions and sub-questions in the *Performance Framework*. The assessment system utilizes the following judgments:

Does not meet standard

Approaching standard

Meets standard

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[1] Rubric indicators are subject to revision by the OEI.

Irvington Community Schools

Background and History of the Irvington Community Schools

The charter for the Irvington Community Schools (ICS) was granted by Ball State for the 2002-2003 academic year. Irvington Community Schools began with 118 K-5 students in one building on Kitley Avenue, and has grown to three campuses—Irvington Community Elementary School, Irvington Community Middle School, and Irvington Preparatory Academy. The elementary school has been in existence since the original charter was granted by Ball State University, while the high school was established in 2007, and the middle school opened in the fall of 2010.

The 2010-2011 academic year brought several significant changes in the Irvington Community Schools. There was a change in school leadership, with the founding president, Mr. Tim Erghott, leaving the school to pursue other opportunities. Mr. David Nidiffer, who served the school as Chief Financial Officer from 2006 to October 2010, became the Interim Chief Executive Officer, before being named full-time Chief Executive Officer in March 2011. Additionally, Irvington Community Middle School opened in the building previously occupied by the Irvington Preparatory Academy, which moved to a new, larger, building.

The 2010-11 academic year was also challenging in that the Leadership team actively addressed issues of change within the three schools, while striving to maintain the identity of the Irvington Community Schools. To reach that goal, the Irvington Community Schools aggressively took on new projects, such as adopting the TAP program at the middle and high schools, switching from the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress to the ACT PLAN/EXPLORE at Irvington Preparatory Academy, developing a new marketing plan for ICS, and providing a cohesive behavior plan, based on the Irvington Way, that is being applied at all three schools. The leadership also worked to retain students from the elementary school, to the middle school, and on into the high school.

In the 2011-12 school year the Irvington Community Schools were recognized by the Department of Education of the State of Indiana as an "A" school, a reflection of the schools' focus on providing their students with a quality education. There were additional staff changes in this school year, with Ms. Deanna Pryor moving from her position of Director of Operations at Irvington Community Elementary School to become Director of Operations of Irvington Preparatory Academy. Mrs. Jodie Lannan, who had been a classroom teacher at the elementary school, replaced Ms. Pryor as Director of Operations of Irvington Community Elementary School.

Changes that occurred in the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years included shifting several ICS staff members into new positions. At the system-wide level, in 2014 Mr. Mike McFadden became the ICS Director of Operations, and Ms. Loryn Venekamp, Director of Curriculum at the middle school, took on the additional duties of ICMS Director of Operations as well. At the Elementary School,

Mrs. Jodie Lannan became the Director of Instruction/Title I, and Ms. Jennifer Daugherty became the Director of Operations.

A successful application for the E-Rate Universal Services Funds has led to the implementation of a one-to-one computer initiative at the middle and high schools. These laptop computers will have access to the mobile broadband network, precluding the need to increase the schools' hardwired internet connectivity. Due to unforeseen delays at the level of the Federal Communication Commission, the rollout of the one-to-one computers has been delayed, leaving leadership and staff at the middle and high schools to cope with the lack of computer resources for the near future. It is important to note that the organizational structure of the Irvington Community Schools places the responsibility for providing effective educational technology with the leadership of ICS, rather than with each school's Director of Operations. For that reason, each individual school will not be considered lacking in this indicator. Discussions with David Nidiffer, CEO of Irvington Community Schools, revealed that leadership is working at the levels of state and federal government to try to resolve the situation.

The Evaluation Process

In 2009, Irvington Community Schools applied for a charter with the Office of Education Innovation of the Mayor of Indianapolis. Consequently, Irvington Community Schools are undergoing the Sixth Year Charter Review and are required to address standards 4.1 – 4.10. It is important to keep in mind, however, that Irvington Community Elementary School is actually in its 13th year of operation (although not in its current configuration), the Irvington Preparatory Academy is in its 8th year of operation, and the Irvington Community Middle School is in its 5th full academic year. The very different lengths of operation affects the evaluation and impacts how well each school meets the standards of the Office of Education Innovation Accountability Framework, and should be kept in mind when considering the outcome of this evaluation.

Research & Evaluation Resources staff engaged in a number of evidence-collecting activities. The focus of this evaluation was to gauge perceptions of key stakeholders at the school in relation to the areas of the performance framework that are part of the evaluation. RER conducted focus group discussions with students, staff, and parents, as well as interviews with the school administration. These focus groups, interviews and classroom observations for the three schools of the Irvington Community Schools were conducted over a 2-week period, October 16-24, 2014. Additional interviews were conducted with School Directors on November 19, 2014. Each school will be evaluated separately on the standards that apply specifically to each site, such as the quality of classroom instruction. Standards and indicators are listed with relevant evidence that was used to determine the recommended rating. Following the discussion of each indicator, a summary of strengths and areas for attention are provided for the core question.

Irvington Community Elementary School

On October 16, 17 & 24, 2014, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 6th year review of Irvington Community Elementary School. Classroom observers spent 5.2 hours (312 minutes) observing 10 classrooms, 227 students, and 11 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 31.2 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 20.6:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability. Please see the Irvington Community Elementary Classroom Observation Summary for a detailed analysis of the observations conducted. Focus groups and interviews with school leadership and parents were conducted on October 16 and 17, 2014, and took place at the school. Additional school leadership interviews were conducted on November 19, 2014.

Irvington Community Middle School

On October 22 & 23, 2014, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 6th year review of Irvington Community Middle School. Ten classroom observations were performed on site using the classroom observation instrument provided by the Office of Education Innovation. These observations lasted for 20-30 minutes. Classroom observers spent 5.4 hours (323 minutes) observing 10 classrooms, 194 students, and 10 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 30.7 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 19.4:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability. Please see the Irvington Community Middle School Classroom Observation Summary for a detailed analysis of the observations. Focus groups and interviews with school leadership and parents were conducted on October 22 & 23, 2014, and took place at the school.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

On October 20 & 21, 2014, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 6th year review of Irvington Preparatory Academy. Ten classroom observations were performed on site using the classroom observation instrument provided by the Office of Education Innovation. Classroom observers spent 5.2 hours (314 minutes) observing 10 classrooms, 188 students, and 10 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 30.4 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 18.8:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability. Please see the Irvington Preparatory Academy Classroom Observation Summary for a detailed analysis of the observations conducted. Focus groups and interviews with school leadership and parents were conducted on October 20 and 21, 2014, and took place at the school.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
IRVINGTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?	Finding
ICES *4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?*	**Meets Standard**
ICMS *4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?*	**Meets Standard**
IPA *4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?*	**Meets Standard**
ICES *4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?*	**Meets Standard**
ICMS *4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?*	**Meets Standard**
IPA *4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?*	**Meets Standard**
4.3 For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?	**Meets Standard**
ICES *4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?*	**Meets Standard**
ICMS *4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?*	**Meets Standard**
IPA *4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?*	**Meets Standard**
4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?	**Meets Standard**
4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	**Meets Standard**
ICES *4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?*	**Meets Standard**
ICMS *4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?*	**Meets Standard**
IPA *4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?*	**Meets Standard**
ICES *4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?*	**Meets Standard**
ICMS *4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?*	**Meets Standard**
IPA *4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?*	**Meets Standard**
4.9 Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students?	**Meets Standard**
4.10 Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to English as Second Language (ESL) students?	**Not Applicable**

Irvington Community Elementary School

4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Meets standard	**The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively.**

No significant concerns were found.

Data gathered through classroom observations, focus group interviews and interviews with the school leadership revealed that the curriculum being enacted at Irvington Community Elementary School (ICES) is standards-based and aligns with the Indiana State Standards (indicator a). Focus group interviews with the teaching staff, as well as interviews with the Director of Operations, Jennifer Daugherty, and the Director of Instruction, Jodie Lannan, revealed that the school leadership and teaching staff are working to adapt the Irvington Community Elementary School curriculum to the new state standards. Mrs. Lannan described the process by which the school responded to the changing standards as one that relied on the teaching staff's knowledge of the Common Core and previous state standards gained through the intensive horizontal and vertical alignment of the curriculum performed during past academic years. Based on their knowledge of the standards, the ICES teaching staff began by identifying the new standards that had remained substantially the same in previous iterations and those standards that had been substantially changed. They then began the crosswalk to the new standards as a process of " teaching to the new standards based on past curriculum maps." At the end of each quarter the teaching staff would then annotate the curriculum maps with the new standards (indicator a).

The process described by the teaching staff was the same as that described by Mrs. Lannan-- that of "modifying their lesson plans as they go" in order to adapt to the new Indiana State Standards. The staff then modify their curriculum maps to match what they had just done in the classroom. As one teacher noted, "it (adapting to the new standards) was so fast over the summer because we got them so late.... we are planning as we go and then go back and adapting the curriculum map." Throughout this process the teaching staff provided Mrs. Lannan with frequent updates regarding their progress in covering the state standards, and are always mindful of the need to present the content in time for ISTEP testing (indicator c). Mrs. Lannan reported that the curriculum maps for spring 2015 would be done in as far in advance as the staff is able in order to provide the best curriculum possible for their students. She also noted that they would be repeating the previous vertical articulation exercise with newly revised curriculum.

The use of student performance data when reviewing the curriculum at ICES is exemplary (indicator b). The teaching staff reports that grade level teams meet at least once each quarter, and often on a monthly basis, to review data from NWEA, Fountas & Pinnell, Successmaker and ISTEP scores in order to review and revise their curriculum maps. The staff specifically commented on the value of the assessment tools available with the Successmaker Digital Learning Curriculum. The particularly noted that the Successmaker testing system was " adaptive and feels like the NWEA MAP... it's nice because you can use it in so many different ways.. the reports (generated by Successmaker) help to design a program for students that the literacy coach. She designed a program that would help with non-fiction comprehension and they (the students) were able to come after school and we could track their progress." Additional data gathering occurs through the use of school-wide writing prompts three times a year and grade level writing prompts at least once a month. The student writing products are reviewed, and the data is used to modify curriculum both at the classroom and school-wide level.

ICES maintains a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that are prioritized and focused on the core learning objectives (indicator d). The curriculum maps for the current academic semester are being developed as the semester progresses, in a "just in time" model made necessary by the timing of the new academic standards. The strong work done by ICES staff and leadership in the past has been useful in the current situation, with the vertical articulation exercise performed in the 2012-2013 academic year forming a strong foundation for cross-walking the curriculum to the new 2014 Indiana State Standards. Curriculum maps and lesson plans included core learning objectives and key concepts to be taught, as well as explicitly listing the applicable state standards.

The Irvington Community Elementary School staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to deliver instruction (indicator e). Focus groups interviews, informal conversations, and classroom observations revealed a staff that is up-to-date in educational best practices and knowledgeable in the curriculums they teach. The teaching staff values the opportunities afforded to them to improve their classroom skills, and particularly the impact they have on the curriculum and how it is implemented. When asked about developing the curriculum around the new state standards, one teacher noted that "We have a lot of freedom... we

all came together and brought our expertise and designed new materials." Another noted that "some of us don't use textbooks at all...we get to use our own creativity and we don't follow a rote script...we have the freedom to put the best lessons together for our students."

Irvington Community Elementary School has provided teachers with a great environment to teach. The majority of classrooms observed contained the programs and materials to deliver the curriculum effectively (indicator f). The teaching staff noted that the Title I room, with the reading materials as well as access to the Title I coaches, has been a valuable asset. There is technology, in the form of smart classrooms, some computers for student use, and internet access, in nearly every classroom. It was noted that the internet access can be spotty, and that the school is working to put more computers in the classroom. As with the middle and high school, the upgrade to the ICES technology framework has been affected by the delay in the E-Rate funding for schools. Once the middle and high schools can use the one-to-one computers provided by E-Rate, many of the computers from those buildings will be transferred to the elementary school.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Elementary School implements a diverse set of standardized assessments and effectively uses data from those assessments to drive instruction and professional development.

The school leadership is providing opportunities for the teaching staff to improve instruction through professional development and school-wide exercises.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Middle School

4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Meets standard	**The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively.**

No significant concerns were found.

Focus group interviews with faculty revealed that the Irvington Community Middle School teachers each create individual class curriculum maps that are aligned to the Indiana State Standards. An examination of the curriculum maps provided by Loryn Venekamp, Director of Operations and Director of Instruction at ICMS, revealed that the maps are organized by month with the scope and sequence of each class noted. Each curriculum map notes the concepts, performance indicators (Indiana Standards) instructional strategies, formative and summative assessments, and primary resources and materials. From the curriculum map, teachers develop their units and weekly/daily lesson plans (indicator a).

Irvington Community Middle School is participating in the Teacher Advancement Program and many of their curriculum review and data practices arise from the practices of the TAP program. The ICMS staff uses an effective process to conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance (indicator b). The process established in previous years as an asset as the staff responded to the 2014 Indiana State Standards and modified their curriculum. As described during teacher focus group interviews, "we saw the new state standards late spring and then dug into them over the summer. We did the cross-curricular mapping and worked out the leveling for 6th grade math." Once mapped, the teachers submit their projected curriculum maps to Mrs. Venekamp, who posts them on the school's public drive, ensuring that all teachers have access

to the curriculum maps of their colleagues. Throughout the school year teachers send Mrs. Venekamp quarterly updates on student performance, organized by the Indiana State Standards. These updates use a color-coding system to denote whether the standard has been taught and if students achieved mastery of that standard. Specifically, if the standard was taught as planned and students achieved mastery based on assessments, the teachers color-code that standard in green. If the standard was taught as planned but the students did not achieve master based on assessments, the standard was color-coded in yellow, which will trigger the standard to be reviewed/revisited. If the standard was not taught as planned it was color-coded in red and then moved to the following quarter where it will be addressed. This color-coding occurs on the curriculum maps and serve as a reminder of student mastery of the standards as lesson plans are being developed. As one teacher noted, " It's a good visual—makes us go back and look at the curriculum map and see what needs to be done." Another noted, "The curriculum maps are all on the server and If we lose a teacher, they (the new staff member) can see the curriculum maps and they can see what they need to cover." The color coded curriculum maps are also used to ensure an effective transition for students from the middle school to the high school. It was noted that information on student progress is shared between middle school and high school staff, with the color coding of the curriculum maps used to inform the high school teachers of the incoming students strengths and weaknesses.

The teaching staff at Irvington Community Middle School regularly reviews the curriculum maps to ensure that all state standards are covered in time for testing (indicator c). The process described above ensures that all standards are taught in a timely fashion as the school year progresses, as do weekly grade-level meetings in which the staff has time to discuss and review curriculum maps and perform horizontal alignment within the grades. Finally, there are opportunities during summer professional development to review curriculum needs and ensure horizontal and vertical alignment between grades. Vertical alignment between grades also occurs in weekly TAP cluster meetings.

As part of the TAP program, ICMS staff engages with the student assessment data in order to prioritize and focus on core learning objectives across the curriculum (indicator d). The school-wide focus in this academic year includes math goals for the students, while the focus for last year was non-fiction writing. The teaching staff at Irvington Community Middle School understands and uniformly uses curriculum materials to effectively deliver instruction (indicator e). Focus group interviews and classroom observations revealed that the ICMS faculty is up to date on current educational best practices.

The majority of classrooms observed contained the programs and materials to deliver the curriculum effectively (indicator f). There is a problem with outdated technology, as there is in Irvington Community Elementary School, with several teachers reporting that there were problems accessing the internet, and general issues with both the equipment and the technological infrastructure. All of these problems will be addressed by the one-to-one computer initiative made possible by the E-Rate funds.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Middle School offers student a high quality curriculum that is modified and adapted to provide the best educational content for students.

Irvington Community Middle School staff regularly engages in well-designed processes and procedures to ensure that the curriculum is up to date.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Meets standard	**The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively.**

No significant concerns were found.

Focus group interviews revealed that the curriculum used at the Irvington Preparatory Academy is currently aligned to the state standards, and the teaching staff reports that it is their common practice is to use the state standards as the basis for designing their curriculum maps (indicator a). IPA school leadership is provided with a copy of each curriculum map for each course offered at IPA, and these maps are reviewed by leadership to ensure that they are accurately aligned to the state standards. A review of the curriculum maps provided by Ms. Pryor revealed a wide variety of detail and completeness in the curriculum maps. In many instances, a very detailed syllabus served as the curriculum map for the semester, a practice that is very similar to a college curriculum. The use of "syllabus as curriculum map" was appropriate for the classes in which they were used in that these courses were often stand alone courses or were part of a sequence of courses within an area that were all being taught by the same faculty member. A review of the sequence of syllabi revealed that each class did build upon the previous, and for the most part was an effective way to map the curriculum. One weakness of this approach, however, is the lack of explicit state standards on the documents, both for the benefit of the students and of the teaching staff implementing the course. Other curriculum maps/syllabi were not detailed enough to determine the overall quality of the curriculum in that area. These documents were more prevalent in the language arts courses.
It is important to note that with each successive review, the quality of the curriculum maps has

increased. Ms. Pryor had made great strides in developing a set of expectations for the faculty that have led to the current curriculum maps being developed. Ms. Pryor reported that the process of reviewing and revising the maps to fill in gaps in student knowledge and to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment was begun in earnest in the 2012-13 academic year, and has continued into the upcoming school year.

The IPA teaching staff take great pride in the curriculum that they have developed, in particular with the unique and often interdisciplinary courses they have designed. When asked if they felt that they "owned the curriculum they are implementing" all of the teaching staff enthusiastically agree. One faculty member noted that "Yes, I designed my courses, I could never go back to a canned curriculum.. it's hard to align a textbook to the Indiana state standards, plus designing my own courses allows me to show my personality... two different teachers can do the class in two different ways... we can make a curriculum that fits our students better and makes us teach better."

The systematic review of the curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance (indicator b) is performed during TAP cluster meetings in order to identify the strategies that will be implemented throughout the school year and is also done at the departmental level throughout the year. The regular review of the curriculum maps to ensure the presentation of content in time for testing is also done at the departmental level, but does not appear to be occurring at the school-wide level (indicator c). The teaching staff conveyed that they turn in curriculum maps and Ms. Pryor reviews them, but that there is no formal mechanism for feedback, with one staff member noting that "there's not much feedback unless we ask for it. We have to submit the curriculum on the public drive. We alter it and make changes based on feedback. We don't know what they do at their end.. they may review it. It Wouldn't hurt to have some feedback." Also valued by the teaching staff is the trust placed in them as professionals to "make a curriculum that best serves the students." The noted that this freedom is in part due to the IPA leadership being willing to "accept 20 different kinds of lesson plans and curriculum maps." When asked what type of oversight of their curriculum they would like, members of the teaching staff replied that they "would only like oversight from fellow teachers and not necessarily from the administrators. Most administrators wouldn't know a good X (discipline area redacted for confidentiality) curriculum as well as we would."

An interview with Ms. Pryor revealed that in fact the IPA leadership does review the curriculum maps on a regular basis in order to ensure a high quality curriculum. As Ms. Pryor noted, "we guide the teachers by asking them questions and then giving them tasks to guide them to where they need to be. Part of the draw that keeps high quality teachers at IPA is the freedom to design their own curriculum." Ms. Pryor actively monitors the quality of the curriculum, checking the flow vertically across courses, and ensuring that the curriculum as a whole meets the needs of their students (indicator d). Thus, the challenge facing Ms. Pryor is to ensure that the curriculum as a whole covers the required state standards, aligns vertically across the curriculum, and presents the information needed for the End-of-Course Assessments required by the state of Indiana, all while allowing a very dedicated and talented teaching staff develop courses that are relevant and interesting to the students. The process that has been developed includes staff activities that include examining the

curriculum as a whole and checking the flow vertically, while concurrently assessing whether the texts assigned are becoming more challenging, that knowledge is needed from the previous class, and what the particular concerns of each staff member are regarding the sequencing of the classes. As Ms. Pryor described the process, "activities that took place included taking the curriculum piece by piece, looking at resources, expectations, grades within courses, completion of homework, what student should be able to do at the end of the course.. and then we looked cross-curricular to see what courses connect in what ways. It's really challenging to do this in a school were the students are at all different levels in different topics, so we developed a spreadsheet that has each area on each page."

Focus group interviews with Irvington Preparatory Academy staff revealed that they uniformly use curricular documents and materials to effectively deliver instruction (indicator e), with several staff members describing innovative projects and lesson that they have designed and implemented at IPA. The teaching staff spoke highly of the opportunities to work across the curriculum, using these courses as an opportunity to examine a topic in more depth across several courses. It is a common practice at IPA to use materials found by the classroom instructors to add to the material found in textbooks with documents and materials found from other sources. Instructors will regularly use primary literatures, video and newspapers to make the topics more relevant and interesting to the students. As one instructor noted, " I went to a conference and made a tour of the textbook people... I didn't see any textbook that met my needs. So we use photocopies from lots of different sources." She also noted that "the students don't have to carry the book back and forth— we keep keep them in the classroom, and with the copies the students can underline, highlight and annotate."

There is a lack of access to technology and problems with the technology infrastructure (indicator f) at IPA, which will be remedied once the E-Rate one-to-one initiative is fully implemented. In the past, IPA teachers had relayed t that they experienced a lack of basic materials to teach their courses. When asked during this site visit, they explained that "We teach with what we have…we don't need a lot of supplies and there have been creative ways to finance. " Another noted that "we use a lot of Teachers' Treasures and grants online." It was stated that the severe lack of materials experienced in the past had lessened, and they were able to teach their courses without concern for having the materials they needed.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy is rapidly improving the implementation of the TAP program and with the strong leadership team currently in place this improvement should continue.

Recommendations: Encourage the IPA teaching to continue updating and revising the curriculum maps and course syllabi. For those instructors without a quality syllabus, the IPA leadership should work with them to develop one.

Irvington Community Elementary School

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Meets standard	**The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices.**

No significant concerns were found.

Classroom observations revealed that the curriculum at Irvington Community Elementary School is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design (indicator a), with all 10 out of 10 teachers observed followed the provided lesson plan. The lesson plans provided were all of very high quality, with the state standards to be covered clearly noted. The amount of detail varied among the lesson plans, but all of the provided enough detail regarding the state standards being covered or the learning objectives for that day to be useful guiding documents. Many of the lesson plans were extremely detailed and very well done. It was also noted that all of the lesson plans contained core learning objectives in the form of "Students will be able to" (SWBAT). These core-learning objectives all aligned to the state standard being covered for that day.

Classroom observations also revealed that, as delivered, the majority of instruction is focused on core learning objectives (indicator b). As noted above, the majority of the lesson plans provided by the teacher who were observed did contain core-learning objectives, and the classroom observations revealed that nine of the ten instructors did deliver a lesson focused on learning objectives. The classroom observations revealed that eight of the ten instructors observed gave lessons that posed a challenge to students and possessed the appropriate rigor (indicator c).

The instructors at ICES show a variety of different strategies in their teaching, including direct instruction, group work, project and problem-based learning, and leveled reading opportunities (indicator d). Ten out of ten instructors were observed to either differentiate instruction based on

student level or included differentiation strategies in their lesson plans. One instructor differentiated the difficulty of a reading assignment for her class, using Reading Circles that required students to demonstrate understanding through multiple learning styles. Differentiating instruction continues to be a focus of professional development at ICES, and discussions with the school leadership and the teaching staff revealed that ICES has been effectively integrating the use of data into their differentiation strategies by using SuccessMaker data to address student weaknesses. Using data from SuccessMaker, Mrs. Lannan, the Literacy Coach, Elisa Stanfill, and members of the teaching staff determined that some students were struggling with comprehension, while others were struggling with fluidity. Based on the students individual data, a remediation plan was designed and implemented using SuccessMaker. The remediation was differentiated according to the particular reading skill lacking, and each student in remediation was tracked using SuccessMaker assessments. Additionally, the Title I coaches will perform progress monitoring for individual students to ensure that they are making appropriate educational gains.

Teacher interviews noted that the school leaders provided regular feedback on their curriculum map and lesson plans, and Mrs. Lannan noted that she meets with the staff monthly by grade level to ensure that the curriculum is responsive to any changes that need to be made in response to student data (indicator e). These meetings also include a discussion of the Response to Intervention program that is being implemented at ICES. The content of lessons is monitored through a series of formal and informal classroom walkthroughs performed by the ICES leadership team.

It is also important to note the ICES has maintained a focus on an liberal arts education at all levels, with students given the opportunity to learn Spanish, Art and Music at the elementary school level. Students also have gym class on a daily basis. The students themselves noted the value of the "specials," when asked what was their favorite thing at ICES, they replied "I like all the different specials—I like the art program and we have music." They also noted that the school offered opportunities for students to work to their full capacity, with one older student noting "I like how well the teachers teach the gifted students-- I like the math class and he's a great math teacher."

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Elementary School has a strong teaching staff, who present rigorous and challenging content throughout the school.

Irvington Community Elementary School is data-driven. Teachers receive timely and accurate data regarding student performance, and they use that data in curricular planning.

School leadership conduct frequent classroom observations, and use that data to improve instruction.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Middle School

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Meets standard	**The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices.**

No significant concerns were found.

Classroom observations using the rubric of the Office of Education Innovation revealed that the curriculum at Irvington Community Middle School is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design (indicator a), with 10 out of 10 teachers observed followed the provided lesson plan. The lesson plans provided were all of very high quality, with the state standards to be covered clearly noted. The amount of detail varied among the lesson plans, but all of the provided enough detail regarding the state standards being covered or the learning objectives for that day to be useful guiding documents. Many of the lesson plans were extremely detailed and very well done. It was also noted that all of the lesson plans contained core learning objectives in the form of "Students will be able to" (SWBAT) or the equivalent.

Classroom observations also revealed that, as delivered, the majority of instruction is focused on core learning objectives (indicator b). As noted above, the majority of the lesson plans provided by the teacher who were observed did contain core-learning objectives, and the classroom observations revealed that 8 of the 10 instructors did deliver a lesson focused on learning objectives.   The classroom observations revealed that 6 of the 10 instructors observed gave lessons that posed a challenge to students and possessed the appropriate rigor (indicator c).

Ten out of ten instructors were observed to either differentiate instruction based on student level or included differentiation strategies in their lesson plans (indicator d).   Teacher interviews noted that the school leaders provided regular feedback on their curriculum map and lesson plans (indicator e), with Mrs. Venekamp regularly reviewing curriculum maps.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Middle School is data-driven. Teachers receive timely and accurate data regarding student performance, and they use that data in curricular planning.

School leadership conduct frequent classroom observations, and use that data to improve instruction.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Meets standard	**The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices.**

No significant concerns were found.

Classroom observations using the rubric of the Office of Education Innovation revealed that the curriculum at Irvington Preparatory Academy is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design (indicator a), with 9 out of 10 teachers observed followed the provided lesson plan (four lesson plans were not provided). An examination of lesson plans, which included lesson plans for the day from all staff (not just those who were observed) revealed that most of the lesson plans contained the state standards, student learning objectives, often in the form of SWBAT's, and a lesson sequence. Many lesson plans also identified strategies and best practices for delivery of the educational content. The quality and level of detail varied greatly among the lesson plans, with some including enough detail to serve as a guide to instruction and others containing very minimal content, lacking essential information such as the date the lesson plan is to be implemented.

Classroom observations also revealed that, as delivered, that instruction is focused on core learning objectives (indicator b) in 9 out of 10 classrooms observed. Further, the classroom observations revealed that only 3 of the 10 instructors observed gave lessons in which the pace of instruction and the content was of the appropriate rigor (indicator c). During focus group interviews, however, students noted that they found the coursework challenging. Further examination of the classroom observations revealed that pacing was the area in need of improvement at Irvington Preparatory Academy, and that the lessons themselves were rigorous.

Classroom observations did not reveal a variety of different strategies in teaching, with 3 of classrooms observed using differentiated instruction to meet the varied interests, styles and learning needs of students (indicator d). The majority of the lesson plans did include differentiation

strategies, suggesting that differentiation was occurring at times when the classroom was not being observed.

As part of the TAP system, school leaders provided regular feedback to the staff on instructional practices, with the TAP master teachers available to provide input during cluster meetings, faculty meetings or in informal talks (indicator e).

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy teachers receive regular feedback on teaching practices as part of TAP. This information is being effectively used to improve classroom practices at IPA.

Recommendations: Additional focus on ensuring that lesson plans are of a uniformly high quality and contain enough information to aid in quality instruction across the curriculum.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

4.3 For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in two or more of the following areas: a) the school's academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) there is a lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance are available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities exist for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in one of the following areas: a) the school's academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) there is a lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance are available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities exist for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.
Meets standard	**The school: a) has challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) has high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) has sufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) presents opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) meets or exceeds Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.**

No significant concerns were found.

Irvington Preparatory Academy offers both Advanced Placement courses as well as the opportunity to take dual credit courses through Ivy Tech and Indiana University, Bloomington (indicator a). In the 2014 school year, nearly 70% of IPA graduates took a dual credit or AP course and 55% of 2014 graduates earned college credit through these offerings. The faculty reports that the IPA curriculum is designed so that all students have the opportunity to earn an Academic Honors diploma at the end of their high school career (indicator e). The students all reported that they were challenged academically at Irvington Preparatory Academy, and that there were many opportunities to engage in challenging coursework. The students also reported that the majority of the classroom instructors had high expectations for their students and were encouraging them to pursue post-secondary academic opportunities (indicator b). Irvington Preparatory Academy goes above and beyond to ensure that students are aware of post-secondary options, and both encourages students to have high goals and celebrates their successes (indicator c). Poster size pictures of IPA graduates and their college options line the entryway at IPA, and college acceptance letters are proudly displayed in the cafeteria. IPA also provides staff dedicated to college counseling, plans school-wide college visits for

all students, not just Juniors, at a frequency of 2 per year for 9th-11th graders to 8 different universities (Manchester University, Indiana University, Taylor University, Purdue University, Ball State University, IUPUI, Ivy Tech and Franklin College), 12th graders are allowed 2 college visit days to travel to the college of their choice. IPA also offers ACT prep sessions as a full semester course.

In addition to a full array of supports for post-secondary educational opportunities, IPA has also added more supports for students who want to pursue vocational educational opportunities. In a collaboration with M.S.D. of Warren Central, IPA has been able to offer students the opportunity to take classes at the Walker Career Center at Warren Central High School. Several IPA students are learning to repair computers, and are on the Tech Support Team for IPA. Career Counseling has also been added to the IPA counseling center, with the ACT WorkKeys battery of tests, which includes career interests and career aptitude testing, being offered. The counseling staff at IPA reviews the data with students to help support them in their future career choices.

Irvington Preparatory Academy also provides a wealth of extracurricular activities to increase post-secondary options (indicator d). Irvington Preparatory Academy offers a variety of athletics, including track, soccer, volleyball, basketball and cross-country, as well as academic clubs such as the National Honors Society, French/Spanish Culture Club--which is planning a trip to Costa Rica-- and the Writing Club. IPA also offers some unique club opportunities that came about through the initiative of the students themselves, in partnership with teacher/sponsors: Travel Club, Anime Club, Do Something Club (service club), Etiquette Club, Ballroom Dancing, Cosplay, Art Club, Student Council, Gay-Straight Alliance and Magic, the Gathering, Club.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy encourages and celebrates their students in their higher-education goals.

Irvington Preparatory Academy provides strong supports for students' secondary education goals throughout all four years of high school.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Elementary School

4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Meets standard	**The school: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is sufficient frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.**

No significant concerns were found.

Irvington Community Elementary School administers standardized and classroom assessments that are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives (indicator a), and are administered with sufficient frequency to inform instructional decisions effectively (indicator d). Specifically, at the school-wide level, ICES administers the Northwest Education Association Measures of Academic Progress three times a year, regular use of SuccessMaker assessments, yearly ISTEP testing. Additional state testing includes the IREAD-3 and IREAD K-2. Additional assessments used are Fountas and Pinnell Benchmarks, which are administered 3 times a year and monitored by the Title 1 team, and a full complement of regular classroom assessments.

Teachers noted in the focus group that the data is disseminated quickly by the Technology Coordinator, Jennifer Woo, and presented in a way that is useful for differentiating instruction and determining student weaknesses (indicator b). Preliminary NWEA RIT scores are presented and recorded at the end of each testing session, and Ms. Woo uploads NWEA test results every afternoon of testing. RIT score data and reports are available on the NWEA Reports Site the following day. Classroom teachers are provided with an NWEA binder with information and resources, that is updated with data and reports following each testing season. Lastly, SuccessMaker Math and Reading reports are available at all times.

The assessments administered at ICES display a sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of learning abilities (indicator c). Of particular note is the ICES teaching staff's skill with NWEA Reports – with teachers reporting that they often disaggregated data in each goal area of Reading, Language Usage, and Mathematics into specific skills. The use of the SuccessMaker

program also allows the teaching staff to access data as well as serves as a guide to differentiating lessons for individual students, meeting them at the level of their academic ability.

Assessment results are often used to guide instruction or make adjustments to the curriculum (indicator e). Interviews with Mrs. Lannan revealed that she is very knowledgeable regarding the NWEA MAP and uses the data from this assessment, as well as the Fountas & Pinnell data, to modify the curriculum when needed. A current initiative, the school-wide writing prompts, are in response to the use of data to modify the curriculum. As Mrs. Lannan described the process, "We Chose writing in response to the data—we looked at the ELA data and found students weren't answering the prompt well.. so we did Smekens professional development to improve writing and reading scores. We drilled down into the data to find out what they (the students) were missing, and took the students actual responses and looked them over. We looked at organization and ideas-- which are power traits and now we are doing explicit grammar instruction. All in response to the data…

Another strong initiative at ICES is the development of Response to Intervention practices by the Title I staff. The positions of Title I Literacy and Math Coach have been developed to provide support for teachers during core instruction time, as well as to use data for progress monitoring in order to determine appropriate RTI responses. Through a data-driven process, the Title I team, with classroom instructors, determine if a student needs Tier 1 classroom interventions, or if the student should be nominated for more intensive Tier 2 individual interventions and remediation. Tier 2 interventions can include individual work with trained Instructional Aides twice a week for 30 minutes in the subject area determined to be lacking. If a student needs Tier 3 interventions, they will work intensively with the Title I coaches, up to twice a week per subject.

In addition to individual remediation, students will often attend TILT. As Ms. Daughtery describes TILT, its is a daily after school intervention (3:20 to 4:00) and instruction is separated based on subject areas. The TILT classrooms are staffed by instructional aides, with 2-3 teachers per room. They perform direct interventions with individual students as well as group work.

 The teaching staff were uniformly complimentary of the Title I Literacy and Math Coaches, Ms. Megan Polesei for Math and Ms Elisa Stanfill for Literacy. Both are experienced classroom teachers who have moved into these newly created positions, and have been valuable assets across the curriculum. One teacher noted, "the literacy and math coaches have made a huge difference-- and the Instructional Assistants as well-- they track the data and the send it to us. They scaffold down for the students that need it. We like the progress monitoring that they do, and knowing that there are intervention steps makes us want to progress monitor too. We know we can do something when we find a problem." Another noted that "the coach is an interventionist to the students and a coach to the teaching staff... they are being utilized more and more each day as an instructional asset." It was noted that the teachers are using the coaches as instructional resources, and that they particularly value their ability to "see across the entire school."

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Elementary School uses a wide-variety of standardized and classroom based assessments, and disseminate the data quickly and in a useful manner to the teaching staff.

Irvington Community Elementary School skillfully uses standardized assessment data to improve instruction at the school-wide curricular level and also at the student-level.

The addition of the positions of Literacy Coach and Math Coach has been a valuable asset to the teaching staff.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Middle School

4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Meets standard	**The school: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is sufficient frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.**

No significant concerns were found.

Irvington Community Middle School uses a variety of assessment techniques to establish learning standards and to ensure that educational objectives are being met (indicator a). ICMS administer ISTEP once a year, and administers the NWEA MAP to measure student academic growth three times a year, providing sufficient frequency of testing to inform instructional decisions effectively (indicator d). Additional testing occurs at the level of each individual grade, often guided by the TAP processes and procedures. Finally, the state standards and overall course objectives are posted in each room, and teachers create their own assessments and adjust teaching to meet these standards and objectives.

One of the strengths of the TAP program is the effective use of data to drive instruction, and as a TAP school Irvington Community Middle School has efficiently utilized these procedures to ensure that assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner (indicator b). Specifically, data from standardized tests are distributed through cluster meetings, with most of the data being available to the classroom teacher within a week of administration. The classroom teachers report that they make a particular effort to grade internal assessments quickly and used that data to adjust classroom instruction. Classroom assessments are designed with sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities (indicator c), with the teachers noting that they work to use a variety of assessment techniques such as standard exam formats, true/false

and multiple choice, as well as using project-based exercises, writing prompts and exit passes. ICMS also incorporates school-wide focus on one topic to provide student data that applies across the school. Using the daily Advisory period, a grade-adjusted exercise in math is given to all students on a regular basis. These exercises are then graded using a consistent rubric across all the classes and grades and the data is shared during cluster meetings.

The results of the assessments employed by the ICMS staff are then used to guide and adjust the curriculum (indicator e). Specifically, the results of NWEA testing are used to determine student placement in either advanced or remediation classes, such as "Mathletes" for students who are capable of advance mathematics and critical thinking classes for students in need of more instruction. NWEA MAP results are further used to determine ability grouping in the classroom, tutoring, assignment differentiation, and classroom curriculum. The teaching staff reports that assessment data is also used during team meetings to align curriculum, during cluster meetings to guide the adjustment of curriculum, and during professional development to align curriculum within grades and across subject areas.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Middle School uses a wide-variety of standardized and classroom-based assessments, and disseminates the data quickly and in a useful manner to the teaching staff.

Irvington Community Middle School skillfully uses standardized assessment data to improve instruction at the school-wide curricular level.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Meets standard	**The school: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is sufficient frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.**

No significant concerns were found.

Irvington Preparatory Academy administers End of Course Assessments (ECA's) as well as the ACT Plan/Explore standardized test, with additional classroom assessments administered by classroom instructors (indicator a). ACT Aspire is taken in fall and spring (indicator d) and the results of these tests are made available to faculty to incorporate into curricular review. Focus group interviews with the IPA teaching staff revealed that the ACT Plan/Explore has one weakness in that the data is not easily disaggregated, with on teacher noting " ... it's still time consuming and difficult to drilldown for classroom or student data." In response to this difficulty with the ACT Plan/Explore, the IPA leadership has been focusing on the data that was judged to be most helpful and presented it during professional development and staff meetings. The teachers described a process of "gallery walks" and data discussions around the ACT Plan/Explore. They also noted that they made full use of the ECA data available and can see individuals student data from this assessment. To add to the data regarding individual students, IPA administered a learning styles survey to the students. This data was shared with the teaching staff, who report using it to help differentiate their instruction. (indicator b).

The data from the ACT Plan/Explore is also used to set school-wide TAP goals, with the data in the past being used to determine that a school-wide focus on problem solving and reasoning was

needed. School-wide assessments on problem solving skills were implemented and the data was shared. The data prompted the use of the A.C.E. (Ask, Compute, Explain) and R.I.C.E. (Read, Illustrate, Calculate, Evaluate) problem solving methods throughout the school. Each classroom instructor implemented these problem solving method in their classrooms, in the manner they thought best for their students. As described by one teacher, "we didn't all see it as a problem, but the pre-assessment showed that it was. We Pushed to use the strategies the classroom and it worked-- the post assessment scores. were significantly higher. Some of us still use some the strategy (indicator e.)

End of course assessments and the ACT Aspire provide data regarding established learning standards/objectives, but do not offer a variety of assessment formats, with both assessments being standardized tests. The teaching staff at IPA do provide a variety of assessments to help guide instruction for a wide range of learning abilities (indicators c & d), describing assessments such as hands on activities, homework, quizzes, projects, games (e.g.,"Jeopardy") as well as formal assessments through tests and essays. IPA staff report that quizzes are usually given at least once a week and that "Bell work" and "exit tickets" are used frequently and serve as checks on day-to-day progress. Further, English 10 teachers benchmark test throughout the semester and adjust accordingly, and students are placed in classes for ECA remediation if they are required to retake the test. IPA also offers "Math Lab" and "Language Arts Lab" as full semester courses for remediation for those exams.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy is using assessment data in innovative way to ensure that their students pass the state mandated end of course assessment.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Schools

4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.
Meets standard	**The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) hiring processes are organized and used to support the success of new staff members; b) the school deploys sufficient number of faculty and staff to maximize instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) is related to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD opportunities are determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.**

No significant concerns were found.

Irvington Community Schools, Inc. has developed consistent hiring practices across our three schools to ensure that all new hires are fully qualified and have been approved by several members of the ICS management team.

After an open position is posted on the Department of Education's Job Bank as well as advertised internally, candidates submit a cover letter and resume as well as a copy of their Indiana Teaching License (for teaching positions). All submissions are then reviewed and a group of candidates are selected for phone interviews. Generally, two staff members participate in the phone interview process and collaborate to decide which candidates will be called for face-to-face interviews. The first face-to-face interview is conducted with at least two staff members, usually a member of the management team and a member of the teaching staff from the department in which there is an opening. After all face-to-face interviews have been completed; the interviewing team then makes a recommendation for which candidates should be called for a second face-to-face interview. The second face-to-face interview takes place with at least two staff members, including at least one member of the Senior Management Team.   Once all second round face-to-face interviews have been completed, all interviewers then collaborate to make a decision on offering the position to a candidate. The candidate's would-be direct supervisor then calls at least one professional reference before the position is formally offered.

This hiring process is used by all three ICS schools, and provides a framework to ensure that teachers hired using this process are a good fit within the Irvington Community Schools.

Irvington Community Elementary School

Susan Griffith, who is an experienced classroom teacher, acts as mentor to new teachers at ICS (indicator a). Ms. Griffith meets with new teachers every other Friday to discuss any problems or answer any questions that new staff members may have. Speaking of Ms. Griffith, a new teacher noted "she is a sympathetic listener when we need it, I could talk to her frankly and she would help me deal with the issues-- it was a private and confidential discussion, and I always felt that she was our advocate. She always honors our confidentiality."

All teachers at the Irvington Community Elementary School are certified or credentialed in their teaching area, or have the appropriate licensure to teach (indicator c). All teachers at Irvington Community Schools must not only be licensed to teach in their subject area in the state of Indiana, but also must meet the state's requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers. The Highly Qualified Teacher Verification Form must be completed by all teaching candidates, along with supporting documentation, and kept in the employee's personnel file. The teachers are teaching course loads that are manageable, and the various staff members have distinct roles (indicator b). Overall, the staff is deployed to best utilize their skills and training.

Professional development is related to the demonstrated needs for instructional improvement and is based on the analysis of assessment data (indicators d & e), with ICES using assessment data from NWEA, ISTEP and Fountas & Pinnell to guide their professional development decisions. Regarding the use of data, it was noted that "they (the school leadership) have been systematic about choosing PD – they let us pick a couple of things that we want to focus on-- and the rest comes from the Title one focus goals, which comes from the data analysis that they do." As noted previously, the use of student data has motivated the school-wide writing prompts, as well as the continued focus on Smekens professional development.

Professional development consists of 6 days of PD before the school year begins and then another day before each break. The school also provides "mini-PD" once a month on Fridays. The leadership determines PD content through a combination of data analysis and surveying the teaching staff regarding their professional needs. The teaching staff noted that one mini PD was a school-wide focus on math that built upon previous professional development in the practice of Singapore Math. Specifically, it was noted that students were struggling with number manipulation and "mental math." The staff worked to make the practices of Singapore Math "their own.. instead of following a script."

In the 2011-12 school year the leadership identified the Smekens Writing Workshop and Smekens Literacy Centers methods as tools to help improve student achievement in both writing and reading. The teaching staff noted that they are continuing the Smekens professional development and stated that it continues to be of value to them. They commented that while a lot is expected of them as classroom instructors, Smekens in particular built on previous knowledge and provided them with a

lot of information. Related to the this point, however, was a request to provide the staff with "differentiated professional development," with basic information being made available to new staff, while more advanced work could be done with the experienced teachers. As one teacher noted, "we do it for our students, why not do it for ourselves."

Irvington Community Elementary School staff is evaluated using the Performance Management Rubric. The current plan calls for three formal observations, with at least one announced and one unannounced. Mrs. Lannan also performs 6-8 informal classroom observations in the course of a year. Walkthrough observations are sent via email within an hour of their completion and each walkthrough contains a reflective question that the teachers are required to respond to. Formal observations are delivered using a post observation conference within 2 days of the observation. The teaching staff report that they have a preconference meeting with Mrs. Lannan, and the entire process is covered during the summer PD. They note that if they do not understand any aspect of the process, the leadership will go through the process until it is completely understood. Their view of the evaluation process is "the process of it---it is fair. They (school leadership) are not out to get us. The intention is not to be punitive and they try to reiterate that it is growth that they are looking for."

The introduction of Mrs. Griffith in her role as Mentor Teacher was also noted as a positive development. The staff noted that the official classroom observations will often be calibrated with those of Mrs. Griffith, providing additional evaluative data for the teaching staff. The staff noted that this is particularly valuable for new staff, who Mrs. Griffith is also mentoring. All staff members noted that they can come to Mrs. Griffith when they have concerns and she can act as the liaison between the leadership and the teaching staff, with the staff feeling comfortable bringing up concerns with her directly, which she can then convey to leadership.

Irvington Community Middle School

All teachers at the Irvington Community Middle School are certified or credentialed in their teaching area, or have the appropriate licensure to teach (indicator c). The teachers are teaching course loads that are manageable, and the various staff members have distinct roles (indicator b). Overall, the staff is deployed to best utilize their skills and training.

Irvington Community Middle School participated in the TAP program, a robust teacher evaluation and professional development framework for schools. Professional development is driven by the TAP focus on student assessment data and is related to demonstrated need for instructional improvement (indicator e).

TAP also provides a comprehensive teacher evaluation framework that is currently being implemented at ICMS (indicator f). The methodology behind TAP is to formally evaluate teachers four times per year, two announced observations and two unannounced evaluations. The career teacher and evaluator meet after each observation to review the lesson and discuss an area of reinforcement (something that went well) and an area of refinement (something that needs improved). The evaluator coaches the teacher on how to improve and provides the teacher a

research-based strategy to help improve the area of refinement. Coaching and follow-up are provided by the master and mentor teachers to the career teachers on a consistent basis to improve instructional practice.

Another component of TAP is weekly professional development through Cluster meetings. The school determines an academic goal for the year based on standardized testing data. The teaching strategies addressed in cluster meetings are to help work towards student improvement in the school goal that was determined using testing data. The cluster meetings occur weekly during which the strategy is presented to the staff by the master and mentor teachers. The career teachers then implement the strategy in their classrooms and report back to cluster how the implementation is proceeding. The master and mentor teachers follow-up with the career teachers by observing, modeling, or co-teaching the strategy in the classroom to ensure that the career teacher understands the concept and is implementing it effectively in the classroom.

Teachers at the Irvington Community Middle School report that they also meet 3 days per year for non-TAP related professional development, in addition to several days of orientation at the beginning of the school year. All of the ICMS teaching staff returned for the 2012-13 school year, and all but one staff member returned for the 2013-14 school year, providing students with a remarkably consistent faculty. New teacher mentoring provided for that faculty member included the assignment of a teacher-mentor to provide support and guidance in acclimating to ICMS, as well as weekly meetings with Mrs. Venekamp to discuss the development of curriculum, lesson plans, or any other topic in which the new faculty needs guidance (indicator a).

Irvington Community Middle School is in its final year of the TAP grant that provided funds for performance-based pay as well as a TAP coordinator from the state-wide TAP initiative. When asked how they will adapt once the TAP program ends, the ICMS teaching staff were very appreciative of what they had learned from the experience and optimistic about the future use of TAP practices. One teacher noted "we will keep some pieces of it, and modify others. I've always felt like it would continue in some way." Another noted that "It's a way of life now – we would implement something similar if we had the choice anyway." Another noted, "I thought of it as temporary at the beginning. We saw it as a way to improve our teaching overall, and it has." A final very pragmatic comment was also made regarding the TAP classroom observation rubric, "teachers need to be observed—all the other paperwork would be fine to go away."

Irvington Preparatory Academy

All teachers at the Irvington Preparatory Academy are certified or credentialed in their teaching area, or have the appropriate licensure to teach (indicator c). The teachers are teaching course loads that are manageable, and the various staff members have distinct roles (indicator b). Overall, the staff is deployed to best utilize their skills and training.

Teachers at the Irvington Preparatory Academy report that they have four "teacher work days," two days a year of professional development, six days of orientation at the start of the year, in addition to the work being done within the TAP framework, which is considerable. The teaching staff noted

that professional development is a combination of one-day or shorter sessions on specialized topics, with sustained professional development occurring throughout the year on others topics, such as differentiated instruction. They did note that the professional development is determined through data analyses performed by the IPA leadership (indicator e). Further, professional development has been driven by the desire to address problems previously seen in the IPA school culture. The teaching staff noted that improving the school climate had been a focus of professional development and noted the particular success of the PD provided by the Peace Learning Center. Teachers also state that there are funds available to participate in professional development opportunities specific to their content areas. The teaching staff also described the new professional development opportunities that will be coming from the one-to-one computer initiative, noting with particular enthusiasm the presence of Ms. Polly Brelage, the E-Learning coach. Ms. Brelage will be offering professional development and support in the student management software being implemented, as well as help the students transition to the use of their laptops for schoolwork. The staff noted the Ms. Brelage has not been able to provide to fully train them in the use of e-learning given that the laptops have not been distributed yet.

New faculty reported that new faculty support occurs within the content area, with new faculty relating that they all work with senior, more experienced, faculty who guide them in adjusting to IPA (indicator a). As one new teacher noted, "while one person may be my official sponsor, the community is good at answering all my questions." Faculty who are new to the field of teaching are also assigned a mentor to work with them.

The TAP comprehensive teacher evaluation framework that is currently being implemented at ICMS is also being implemented at IPA (indicator f). As with ICMS, Irvington Preparatory Academy is in the final year of the TAP funding. When asked about the prospect of not implementing TAP in the future, the teaching staff felt confident that they would be able to continue the practices of TAP that had been beneficial in the past. Overall, their views on TAP were mixed, and therefore their opinions regarding its end were also mixed. One teacher noted that "It had it's moments though-- it was useless the first year and the implementation was tough, but I do see the value of it now. " Other staff members agreed, particularly when comparing the TAP program to other teacher evaluation programs, noting that "I would not like to do RISE."

The aspects of TAP most appreciated by the staff were the TAP cluster meetings, and the opportunities during those meetings to share with, and learn from, their colleagues. They did note that the cluster meetings many have been too frequent, with one teacher stating that,"There were some moments of good sharing time in TAP—there were other weeks seem forced because we had to find something to do." The feeling that the meetings were too frequent may have been due to the requirement of participation in TAP. The teaching staff was also appreciative of the TAP rubric, and the feedback on their teaching they received through the use of the rubric.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Schools use a very thorough and effective process to interview and select new members of the teaching staff.

Student achievement data is used effectively by all three schools to determine professional development needs.

Implementation of the TAP system at ICMS and IPA have led to very effective data-use and a well documented teacher evaluation which has led to improved teacher performance. Both schools are prepared to continue with many of the TAP-based practices once the TAP funding ends.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Schools

4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>both</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school's mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school's mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.
Meets standard	**The school: a) has a mission that is shared by all stakeholders; b) has stakeholders possessing widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.**

No significant concerns were found.

The school's mission statement is reflective of the commitment to provide a small, safe learning community that is committed to a college preparatory curriculum that prepares students for success post secondary experiences. Embedded within the mission statement are the core values of The Irvington Way, the school's character education philosophy. Those values include respect, responsibility, safety, involvement, and focus. Teachers and students commit to following The Irvington Way as part of maintaining a learning environment that promotes success for all students. The Irvington Way weaves a theme of personal commitment through all three schools that starts in kindergarten and carries through with them to their post secondary experiences. Throughout the interviews with teachers, students and parents the Irvington Way was noted as being part of the mission, but was not the only aspect of the mission noted. All stakeholders interviewed cited the focus on providing students with a quality education from K-12, a focus on higher education as a goal, and a commitment to educating the whole child by providing instruction in art, music and language (indicator a).

Parents also commented on the importance of the school mission, and displayed a depth of understanding and commitment to the school mission (indicator b). One focus for the parents was the ICS schools as "neighborhood schools." As one parent noted, " When the kids go out and play—they know the kids all around them. They go to Ellenberger Park and they know all the kids… The parents also noted that the mission of the schools are "Children first—get them to be qualified for college and for successful careers." Another parent noted that she valued the Irvington Way for "Redefining success as being a good person... they are building values in the children as they educate them at the school, and they care enough to follow through." Finally, another parent said, "We have a good thing here –it has built Irvington more solidly--it's a neighborhood community— the kids grow up together… and the teachers love for the kids is great...It's making a unique little spot and people want to be part of this school."

The parents also noted that students, and high school students in particular, do a great deal to give back to the local community, noting that they perform community service throughout the Irvington neighborhood. Examples of the work done by the high school students include the KIB (Keep Indianapolis Beautiful) campaign, and volunteering at the Wheeler Mission. A high school teacher

observed that, "It's about being a good person and a good citizen. We are focusing on service learning and making it a requirement that will be part of every grade level." Three of the parents interviewed also noted that their family has stayed in the Irvington neighborhood because of the quality of the ICS schools, and the opportunity to send their children to a quality school from grades K-12. Local Irvington parents are not alone in seeing the value of an ICS education; several parents related that they drive up to 45 minutes to bring their students to the ICS schools.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Schools have a compelling mission that is instantiated daily in the life of all three ICS schools.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Elementary School

4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and/or unproductive.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive.
Meets standard	**The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach possesses high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive and faculty and students are clear about processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive.**

No significant concerns were found.

Irvington Community Elementary School has a clearly stated set of behavioral rules that enforce positive behavior in *The Irvington Way* (indicator a). The tenets of the Irvington Way are recited daily during announcements, are posted in every classroom, and are part of the Irvington Way Family contract that state the expectations for teachers, parents, and students and are signed by all parties at the beginning of each school year. The role of the Irvington Way in the culture of ICES cannot be overstated—as noted by one teacher "the founders of ICS established a culture of respect and we have kept it that way." This culture of respect flows through all aspects of the behavior of students, staff and parents. For example, each student at ICES has an ICS folder and/or agenda book containing school policies and rules that are sent home nightly. Finally, behavior sheets are sent home each Friday for parents to sign and return that reinforce the importance of following school rules. In addition to enforcing the Irvington Way throughout the school day, ICES also uses a system of positive behavior management that provides high expectations for student behavior (indicator b). Positive behavior management at ICES includes the practice of focusing on one character trait per month with the school counselor visiting each class during the month to teach the character trait. ICES also rewards positive behavior with the "Lighthouse Leader" program. Lighthouse Leaders are chosen weekly from each class based on the current character trait. These students receive a prize, and pictures are posted in the front office. Interviews with student revealed that they value the position of "Lighthouse Leader" very highly and work to win the title. Finally, students can earn "Character Cards" for exemplifying the current character trait and names of students who earn "Character Cards" are announced daily on the announcements.

In those instances in which a behavior is unmanageable or serious enough to require third-party intervention, a teacher may refer that student to the Director of School Climate (Behavior Coach) by filling out a Behavior Referral Form. The Behavior Coach then investigates the situation, meets with the student, contacts the parents, and assigns consequences as necessary. Parents are informed through Referral Tracking sheets. Finally, Behavior Referral Board meetings are used when a student shows a pattern of inappropriate behavior. The parents and student meet with the Behavior Referral Board Team to discuss the behaviors and collaborate on solutions. In some cases, individual student behavior contracts are made by the team to differentiate behavior goals for students who are at risk-- the goal being to raise expectations as behavior improves and notice trends. Each month, the Behavior Coach compiles the referral data and creates a report for the faculty and staff. The data is analyzed to look for trends and areas of weakness in behavior management.

Classroom observations, informal conversations, and focus group interviews with parents, teachers, students and school leadership reveals a school community that is respectful and supportive of each other. Interactions between faculty and students were observed to be respectful and supportive (indicator c), with faculty and students clear about the processes for resolution of conflicts. Focus group interviews revealed that the teaching staff appreciate the ability to use a discipline system of their own design, with the majority of teachers in the lower grades using a color system in which colors are used to represent student behavior and students move clips to the designated color when they are either praised for good behavior or disciplined. The students are quite comfortable with this system, because as one 2nd grade student explained " If you do bad things you move down and if you do good you move up."

The teaching staff noted that the overall discipline philosophy at ICES is "Deal with the students in your classroom first and only call the principal in extreme situations when you need her." They also noted, however, that when they need support, "She (Ms. Daugherty) comes and responds so quickly—I don't feel like I have to deal with it in the room--- she is available." They also noted that teachers support each other in the "buddy classroom" model, " we will send kids out of the classroom and into the buddy classroom." The teaching staff did convey that in future professional development they would like to learn strategies to "bring the student back from where they are" in those situations where students "completely shut down and we have to bring them back."

Interactions between faculty and the administration were reported by the teaching staff to be professional and constructive (indicator d). Ms Daugherty has focused on building a community of colleagues that provides "a system of verbal support and encouragement" for each other. She noted that she makes a point to "push for support and encouragement within teams and in team members," noting that "we need to model this for the kids." Ms. Daugherty is very intentional in her focus on creating a caring and professional environment at ICES, explaining that "I'm working toward creating a place where I want to continue to work."

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Elementary School provides students with an easily understood and well-implemented discipline policy in the Irvington Way.

Positive behavior supports are in place to encourage good behavior rather than punish bad behavior. However, should it be necessary to move beyond the positive behavioral supports offered by ICES, there is a well designed behavior management process in place.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Middle School

4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and/or unproductive.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive.
Meets standard	**The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach possesses high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive and faculty and students are clear about processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive.**

No significant concerns were found.

Staff and leadership at ICMS ensure that the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior through the use of the passport program, which rewards students who exhibit the behaviors of the Irvington Way (indicators a & b). This program offers incentives such as field trips, public recognition, gift cards, homework passes, and bonus points to students who collect signatures of staff for academic behaviors that affect the individual and their academic progress. The Irvington Way is a common set of behavior principles that begin in the elementary school and carry through to the Irvington Preparatory Academy. To reinforce positive choices, students recite the Irvington Way each morning, as well as it being posted in each and every class.

Through positive behaviors, students earn the opportunity to participate in pep rallies and various assemblies throughout the year. The ideas of The Irvington Way require that students and staff live up to high expectations in their behavior. Students, parents, and teachers are all made aware of the behavior rubric. Additionally, the Student Handbook includes a bullying policy, an attendance policy is outlined, general policies and procedures for behavior, classroom management, behavior coaching, and community management. ICMS has also developed a "minor incident system" that better defines the system for minor disciplinary infractions, and clearly explains the type and number of behaviors that will promote a series of minor incidents to a disciplinary problem.

Although students have been guided by the tenets of the Irvington Way since elementary school, the staff at ICSM provides additional support for students as they enter middle school. The staff conducts a series of meetings with incoming 6th graders outlining expectations, policies, and behavior management, as well as school tours for prospective students, which includes an outlining of the expectations, policies, and behavior management of the middle school. Finally, ICMS

students are held to high expectations is through Academic, Attendance, and Behavior referral boards.

Interactions between faculty and students were observed to be respectful and supportive (indicator c), with students reporting during focus group interviews that they felt safe at their school. Mr. Jeff Clark, the Behavior Coach, is integrally involved in all aspects of the disciplinary system at ICMS, and provides the school-wide supports that create a safe, respectful and supportive school culture. Mr. Clark goes far beyond the traditional role of a "behavior coach," and is a valuable support for both the students and the staff. Mr. Clark oversees the public safety aspect of the school, and as he noted "makes sure that everyone who visits the school is now and that the kids are safe." He also ensures that the students themselves do not cause an disruptions during the school day, so that the staff can "create the environment where the kids can learn." Mr. Clark described his process for a supportive and happy school culture: "I sit in the lunch period with the students and that's where I get my intel and I can see if there are any bad interactions between students. I try to be proactive--I don't let an incident go until it becomes a real problem."

In addition to these more traditional activities, Mr. Clark also greets the students as they enter the building to "do a quick check and see where they are at." He sends out emails to the staff regarding students that had no breakfast so that there will be food available for them before the school day starts. He communicates with parents and monitors students who are approaching the 5 minor incidents that will result in a discipline referral. He works closely with the teachers, and has earned their trust, with teachers noting that he supports them in all aspects of classroom management and behavior issues, noting that "the Behavior Coach is very consistent and treats every moment as a teachable moment." They also noted that "in the first weeks of school Jeff was getting a lot of information about the students (from the teaching staff), and then down the road he didn't have to deal with any expulsions," echoing Mr. Clark's view that it is better to be proactive than to resort to more punitive measures. The teachers have noticed that the students appear to embrace this view as well, when "the students do it with each other. The new students come (ICMS) and the older kids stop them from acting up."

Interactions between faculty and administration at Irvington Community Middle School are professional and constructive (indicator d). In fact, during the discussion of faculty/administration interactions, the teaching staff conveyed that the quality of the professional

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Middle School provides students with an easily understood and well-implemented discipline policy in the Irvington Way.

Interactions between the staff and school leadership are particularly beneficial and have led to a high retention rate among the teaching staff.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and/or unproductive.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive.
Meets standard	**The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach possesses high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive and faculty and students are clear about processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive.**

Irvington Preparatory Academy has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior in the form of the Irvington Way, which is posted in all classrooms and recited at the start of the school day (indicator a). The Irvington Way is also the basis for the Freshman Behavior Talks and is integrated into advisory curriculum. Further, incoming families meet with Behavior Coaches to discuss the Irvington Way and The Irvington Way is published in Student Handbook. Finally, individual teachers provide students with syllabi with the classroom rules clearly stated.

The school's discipline policy is focused on encouraging positive behavior (Behavior Coaches rather than Dean of Discipline, etc) and at-risk students are given opportunities for character development in and outside of the school building and school day (Boys to Men, Ropes Course, Etiquette Club, Manners for Men). Positive reinforcement is also used in the form of Raven of the Week, Academic Awards, Travel Club, and the National Honor Society (indicator b). Interactions between faculty and students were observed to be respectful and supportive (indicator c), with students conveying during focus group interviews that the rules and processes around the behavior plan were clear and well understood. As one teacher noted, "the students appreciate the respectful way that the discipline is put into place and the way they all know what is expected." They also noted that the school culture has 'improved a lot over the last couple of years. We have built a foundation and have hit the critical mass that has made it (the Irvington Way) the norm."

A great deal of the credit for this successful school culture is attributed to the effectiveness of the point system that has been put in place, and the hard work of the Behavior Coaches. The point system is implemented throughout the school, with points being awarded for any infraction of the Irvington Way. If a student accumulates enough points they will go up a "level" and the disciplinary action that correlates to that level. The use of points and levels is widely embraced among the

teaching staff, with comments such as, "you feel like when you give them points that there are real consequences," and "the institution of the point system has diminished the problems and has improved things.. if a kid has his shirt untucked there is a lot less back talk and a lot more shirts being tucked." The teachers attribute the success of the point system to a combination of rewards for not being on a level (jeans or jersey day) or and consequences, such a Friday school, if they are on a level. They also noted that the point system was being applied uniformly and consistently, and that it provides a "middle ground" between infractions that require a referrals and the smaller infractions that do not. The teaching staff reports that they have an excellent relationship with the behavior coaches, noting that they "back them up a lot" and that the behavior coaches, Miss Harmeyer and Mr. Ballard, were working with at-risk students every day in order to build relationship with the students in the hope of preventing any disciplinary issues in the classroom. The teaching staff was particularly impressed with Mr. Ballard's singing during lunch to celebrate students' birthdays, as well as the behavior coaches participation in the ALS ice bucket challenge. The behavior coaches were described as being "amazingly dedicated and always willing to put in extra time with kids."

Interactions between the IPA leadership and the teaching staff were observed to be professional and supportive. The camaraderie of the teachers was apparent during the focus group interviews, and they themselves commented on the work that has gone into building good relationships among the staff, in particular noting team building exercises, holiday parties and games after professional development sessions. They see their school as a community and believe that " the community ties this school together. The collegiality among the staff is seen as a large part of the success of IPA, with one teacher explaining, "We know our kids and what they need.... and the kids know that we will do what we have to do to make them succeed. They see the staff working their butts off for them and supporting each other, and then the kids buy in to it." Another teacher continued, "the students are amazed that we hang out together after school. There isn't an us against them mentality with the leadership. Some schools are very demanding, here they allow us to be professionals—they know that we are good at what we do so they allow us the freedom to do what we need to do."

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy provides students with a safe and effective environment in which to learn. IPA has shown great improvement in the design and implementation of its behavior plan.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Elementary School

4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Meets standard	**The school: a) has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) utilizes communications that are both timely and relevant to the parental concerns; c) communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents; d) the school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., communicating in parents' native languages, not communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at convenient times for parents).**

No significant concerns were found.

Irvington Community Elementary School has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents (indicator a), with the teaching staff using a variety of ways to communicate with parents. These communications take the form of school newsletters, classroom newsletters from each teacher, behavior reports send home daily or weekly, parent-teacher conferences held four times a year, phone messenger systems, emails, phone calls and face to face discussion during pick up and drop off. ICES teachers are required communicate with parents at least once every two weeks to discuss behavior, academics, or any other concerns. Many teachers are also able to meet with parents during the dismissal times (3, 3:20 & 4) so there is constant dialogue between teacher/parent. All of this activity is recorded in the communication log that is turned in at the end of the year (indicator b). The teachers noted that the content of communication with parents are substantive and valuable for both teachers and parents.

Irvington Community Elementary School communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents through parent/teacher conferences in which teachers explain grades and test results from NWEA, Fountas and Pinnell and ISTEP. Additionally, progress reports are sent home at a minimum of once per quarter and some teachers choose to communicate with parents more frequently, providing parent with a steady flow of information. Finally, parents can access their students' grades on Powerschool.

The school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (indicator d), with many school materials translated into Spanish. Further, teachers offer extended

times to meet with parents during conference week, or will come into school early, schedule meetings during school hours and after hours.

Focus group meetings with parents revealed that they are happy with the quality and amount of communication provided by ICES. They noted that the teaching staff communicates with them using a variety of methods, including email, phone calls and conversations during drop-off and pick-up. The parents did note that the ICS PTSA would benefit from more meetings that focused on topical discussions relevant to the school, discussions of current events that impact their children, or presentations about local events or community groups. They specifically noted the success of the Literacy Night and Math Munchies events that were organized by the Title I Literacy and Math coaches, another example of their positive impact on the school.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Elementary School staff is friendly and responsive to parents, providing them with a information about their students through a variety of different modes of communication.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Middle School

4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Meets standard	**The school: a) has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) utilizes communications that are both timely and relevant to the parental concerns; c) communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents; d) the school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., communicating in parents' native languages, not communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at convenient times for parents).**

The ICMS staff employs a wide variety of communication methods to ensure that the communication between parents and the school are frequent and useful. Examples such as a weekly school newsletter, weekly grade level newsletters, daily homework emails, weekly tutoring notices, and weekly missing assignment slips provide parents with timely and accurate information regarding their student's progress.

Additional correspondences such as the school website, Facebook and Twitter sites ensure that all possible social media are being used to communicate with parents. Finally, Powerschool communication, teacher/club blogs, quarterly parent/teacher phone conference logs as well as weekly progress reports, quarterly student led-conferences, club newsletters and informational letters, culture team/grade level team brochures, yearly calendar and events calendar and academic passports ensure that the parents are fully aware of their student's progress. To ensure that the parents fully understand the information being provided NWEA results are graphed and explained, relevant comments are made on report cards, and goal letters for ISTEP are sent out prior to testing. Finally, parents are required to sign academic agendas and report cards.

In those instances when behavioral issues arise, parents are kept fully informed through behavioral phone conferences for each major incident, concern letters/phone contact, teacher concern/personal emails, and daily behavior logs for assigned students. Communication with special education parents is particularly important, so ICMS staff ensure that there is a special education parent contact, regular special education progress reports and that the special education conferences are set up at parent convenience.

Additional communication occurs through weekly grade level curriculum letter, the availability of classroom syllabi, general progress reports as well as testing (NWEA) letter results, academic opportunity letters for 21st Century Scholars, Parent Surveys, automated all call messages for parents and convenient parent scheduling of student led conferences during assigned days. Finally, ICMS reaches out to parents through the use of enrollment forms in Spanish, bilingual phone conferences, meetings arranged at parents' convenience for behavior or special needs, and academic student-led conferences.

Parents noted that PowerSchool is very easy to use, however it is sometimes not up to date. The parents did express satisfaction with the information provided at parent conferences and on the report card, which they noted was easy to read and complete. They also reported that the NWEA scores were shared with them and explained in a way that they found helpful. The parents also commented on the overall redesign of the webpage, with several noting that it was much easier to find information on the current website than in the past.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Middle School staff is friendly and responsive to parents, providing them with information about their students through a variety of different modes of communication.

Recommendations: Continue working to establish an active PTSA.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Meets standard	**The school: a) has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) utilizes communications that are both timely and relevant to the parental concerns; c) communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents; d) the school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., communicating in parents' native languages, not communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at convenient times for parents).**

The Irvington Preparatory Academy staff employs a wide variety of communication methods to ensure that the communication between parents and the school are frequent and useful (indicator a). IPA provides a weekly school newsletter and School Messenger is used by the leadership team to keep parents updated on events, activities, and concerns with the school, as well as to alert parents if their child is tardy, absent, etc. The school website is available for calendar and announcements. Email with any teacher is easily accessible through the school website and because all teachers have a uniform email address (indicator b).

Powerschool, the online gradebook, is available for all parents and students to view attendance, grades, and teacher comments at any time (indicator c). IPA uses Power Announcer to deliver important announcements in a timely manner and calls to remind parents of events prior to the event taking place. Letters are also sent home in relation to behavior and academic problems. Enrollment materials are in English and Spanish and IPA has the ability to provide translation services to parents who are not fluent in English.

Board meetings are always announced, as are PTSA meetings, and are at convenient evening hours. Meeting notices are posted on the main doors and with street signs in front of the school. Additional growth of the PTSA is expected in the future, since the current PTSA is now combined across all three schools, forming one K-12 PTSA.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy staff is friendly and responsive to parents, providing them with information about their students through a variety of different modes of communication.

Recommendations: Continue working to establish an active PTSA.

Irvington Community Schools

4.9. Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is moving towards best practice?	
Does not meet standard	The school's special education files present concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) do not adequately match the exceptional needs of the student; b) each need identified within the IEP does not have a corresponding goal and plan for assessment; c) all goals are not rigorous or based on state or national learning standards; d) evidence does not demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student developed; e) specifically designed curriculum is not outlined.
Approaching standard	The school's special education files present concerns in <u>one</u> or more of the following areas: a) services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) do not adequately match the exceptional needs of the student; b) each need identified within the IEP does not have a corresponding goal and plan for assessment; c) all goals are not rigorous or based on state or national learning standards; d) evidence does not demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student developed; e) specifically designed curriculum is not outlined.
Meets standard	**<u>All</u> of the following are evident in the school's special education files: a) services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student; b) each need identified within the IEP has a corresponding goal and plan for assessment; c) each goal is rigorous and is based on state and national learning standards; d) explicit evidence exists to demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student develops; e) specifically designed curriculum is outlined.**

No significant concerns were found.

This report compiles a review of all practices and procedures specific to special education services at Irvington Community Schools (ICS). The results of this evaluation are based on the following pieces of data collected at all three school sites: classroom observations, review of internal processes and procedural manuals, interviews with general education and special education staff, students with IEPs, review of 25% of IEPs housed at the ICS, DOE data bases, ICS website, and follow up interviews with families of students with IEPs at ICS.

All of the following are evident in the school's special education files: (a) services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student; (b) each need identified within the IEP has a corresponding goal and plan for assessment; (c) each goal is rigorous and is based on state and national learning standards; (d) explicit evidence exists to demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student develops; (e) specifically designed curriculum is outlined.

The special education services offered at ICS have grown and developed exceptionally well. Improvements in the secondary program were most prominent. The implementation of a program wide policy and procedures manual, as well as monthly special education meetings across k-12 teachers have made a notable impact on ICS's ability to provide consistent services across all three sites. File audits revealed that all three sites are writing high quality and applicable IEPs (4.9 a,b,c,d,e).

Irvington Community Schools

4.10. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?	
Does not meet standard	The school is <u>not</u> fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires substantial improvement in order to achieve conditions such as the following: a) appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; b) relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.
Approaching standard	The school is not yet completely fulfilling all of its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires *some* (but not considerable) improvement to fully achieve conditions such as the following: a) appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; b) relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.
Meets standard	The school is fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, as indicated by conditions such as the following: a) appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; b) relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.

Not Applicable.

Irvington Community Elementary School Classroom Observation Summary

On October 16, 17 & 24, 2014, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 6th year review of Irvington Community Elementary School. Classroom observers spent 5.2 hours (312 minutes) observing 10 classrooms, 227 students, and 11 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 31.2 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 20.6:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability.

Classroom Environment

100% (10/10) had posted objectives. 100% (10/10) used critical vocabulary. 100% (10/10) had challenging content. 100% (10/10) has posted state standards (10/10). 60% (6/10) exhibited differentiation. 0% (0/10) of the instruction observed built on prior knowledge.

Learning Environment

The observers categorized observed learning experiences into four main categories. 90% (9/10) of observed activities were Remember/Understand Activities. 100% (10/10) were Apply/Perform Activities. 0% (0/10) were Analyze/Evaluate Activities. 0% (0/10) were Create/Design Activities. 0% (0/10) of activities were found to be ineffective.

100% (10/10) of classrooms contained rich print materials. 60% (6/10) showed examples of exemplary work. 100% (10/10) displayed a daily schedule. 100% (10/10) had posted behavior expectations. 60% (6/10) had culturally relevant materials.

Behavior Management

The site team observed proactive and reactive techniques. The site team recorded 10 (100%) classrooms using proactive discipline. 10 (100%) classrooms using reactive discipline were recorded. Student engagement varied widely. Please see the table below.

Topic of Lesson	
Reading Centers	Multiplication
Mental Math	Midwest States and Capitals
Writing Captions	Main Idea Comprehension
Reading Comprehension	Poetry/Metaphor
Reading Centers	Main Idea in Text

Proportion of Students Engaged:	All		Most		Half		Few		None	
	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total
First Interval	5	50%	5	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Second Interval	4	40%	6	60%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Third Interval	3	30%	7	70%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Irvington Community Middle School Classroom Observation Summary

On October 22 & 23, 2014, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 6th year review of Irvington Community Middle School. Ten classroom observations were performed on site using the classroom observation instrument provided by the Office of Education Innovation. These observations lasted for 20-30 minutes. Classroom observers spent 5.4 hours (323 minutes) observing 10 classrooms, 194 students, and 10 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 30.7 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 19.4:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability.

Classroom Environment

100% (10/10) had posted objectives. 100% (10/10) had posted state standards. 100% (10/10) used critical vocabulary. 90% (9/10) had challenging content. 60% (6/10) exhibited differentiation. 100% (10/10) of the instruction observed built on prior knowledge.

Learning Environment

The observers categorized observed learning experiences into four main categories. 70% (7/10) of observed activities were Remember/Understand Activities. 80% (8/10) were Apply/Perform Activities. 30% (3/10) were Analyze/Evaluate Activities. 10% (1/10) were Create/Design Activities. 10% (1/10) of activities were found to be ineffective.

60% (6/10) of classrooms contained rich print materials. 10% (1/10) showed examples of exemplary work. 70% (7/10) displayed a daily schedule. 100% (10/10) had posted behavior expectations. 60% (6/10) had culturally relevant materials.

Behavior Management

The site team observed proactive and reactive techniques. The site team recorded 10 (100%) classrooms using proactive discipline. 10 (100%) classrooms using reactive discipline were recorded. Please see the table below for student engagement data.

Topic of Lesson	
Superheroes	Verb conjugation
Art	Rational Numbers
Plastics Lab	Geography/Economic Resources
Domain, Range &Functions	Phases of the Moon

Proportion of Students Engaged:	All		Most		Half		Few		None	
	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total
First Interval	5	50%	5	50%	1	13%	0	0%	0	0%
Second Interval	5	50%	5	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Third Interval	6	60%	4	40%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Irvington Preparatory Academy Classroom Observation Summary

On October 20 & 21, 2014, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 6th year review of Irvington Preparatory Academy. Ten classroom observations were performed on site using the classroom observation instrument provided by the Office of Education Innovation. Classroom observers spent 5.2 hours (314 minutes) observing 10 classrooms, 188 students, and 10 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 30.4 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 18.8:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability.

Classroom Environment

100% (10/10) had posted objectives. 100% (10/10) had posted state standards. 100% (10/10) used critical vocabulary. 100% (10/10) had challenging content. 100% (10/10) exhibited differentiation. 100% (10/10) of the instruction observed built on prior knowledge.

Learning Environment

The observers categorized observed learning experiences into four main categories. 60% (6/10) of observed activities were Remember/Understand Activities. 70% (7/10) were Apply/Perform Activities. 0% (0/10) were Analyze/Evaluate Activities. 10% (1/10) were Create/Design Activities. 0% (1/10) of activities were found to be ineffective.

20% (2/10) of classrooms contained rich print materials. 70% (7/10) showed examples of exemplary work. 50% (5/10) displayed a daily schedule. 100% (10/10) had posted behavior expectations. 80% (8/10) had culturally relevant materials.

Behavior Management

The site team observed proactive and reactive techniques. The site team recorded 10 (100%) classrooms using proactive discipline. 10 (100 %) classrooms using reactive discipline were recorded. Please see the table below for student engagement data.

Topic of Lesson	
Human Brain	Paragraph Structure
Cell Types	Multiplication of Exponents
Political Parties/Voting	Inverse Functions
Atomic Structure	Cell Cycle
AP Calculus	Historical Poetry

Proportion of Students Engaged:	All		Most		Half		Few		None	
	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total
First Interval	1	10%	8	80%	1	10%	0	0%	0	0%
Second Interval	1	10%	7	70%	2	20%	0	0%	0	0%
Third Interval	1	10%	6	60%	3	30%	0	0%	0	0%